

Access to Electronic and Information Technology Policy Statement June 14, 2001

**THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590**

The is the policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide access to all of its programs services and information to people with disabilities that is comparable to the level of access provided to others. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and related Departmental regulations, have made this a requirement since 1978. With the passage of recent amendments to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, we must also ensure that the Department's electronic and information technology (EIT) meets specific accessibility standards for people with disabilities, including both employees and the customers we serve, whenever we develop, procure, maintain or use EIT.

Section 508 requires us to provide accessible EIT to the Department's employees with disabilities, to enable them to successfully do their jobs and enjoy the same benefits of training and career opportunities that are available to others in the workforce. Also, Section 508 requires us to provide our customers with disabilities accessible EIT to enable them to enjoy the same benefits of the Department's programs, services and information that are available to others.

To guide us, the U.S. Access Board established new EIT accessibility standards, the General Services Administration issued new EIT acquisition requirements and the Department of Justice (Justice) provided compliance coordination. To implement Section 508, beginning June 21, 2001, the Department must acquire EIT products that meet the new standards and acquisition requirements. In addition, we will strive to develop, maintain, and use EIT that meets the new standards, unless doing so would result in an undue burden. The Department will also cooperate with Justice by providing data about EIT accessibility and other issues.

I am asking all employees to make a strong commitment to providing the Department's programs, services and information, including its EIT, in a format that is accessible to people with disabilities. Also, I am calling on all managers and supervisors to provide the leadership necessary to accomplish these important goals. To help ensure that the Department implements this policy and related requirements, I am directing the Chief Information Officer and the director of the Departmental Office of Civil Rights to provide policy guidance and technical assistance to the Operating Administrations and Secretarial Officers. Additionally, I expressly delegate to all Administrators the responsibility to conduct compliance procedures, including the processing of complaints and appeals, covered by 49 C.F.R. Part 28.

/Signed/
Norman Y. Mineta